



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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## A Look at Our "Rural Futures"

PATTY RITCHIE August 29, 2016



\*\*\*[CLICK HERE TO READ THE SUMMER EDITION OF "RURAL FUTURES"](#)\*\*\*

From beautiful scenery to close knit communities, there are so many great things about living in a rural area. However, as someone who has spent her entire life living in Northern New York, I know that the rural regions of our state face a number of challenges, too.

Earlier this year I was named co-chair of the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources, a position that allows me to more strongly advocate for the unique needs of our rural communities, as well as create policies aimed at boosting the economic

revitalization of non-urban areas throughout the state. In this new role, I have been focused on a number of key issues, including strengthening essential industries—like agriculture, manufacturing and tourism—making delivery of health care more efficient, improving infrastructure and addressing the unique educational needs of students in rural schools, among others.

To shine a light on some of the exciting happenings in our rural communities, just this month I released the summer 2016 edition of “Rural Futures,” a publication that shares important—and interesting—news about rural New York State.

Some of the highlights of the latest edition of Rural Futures include:

***Building Future Leaders:*** This article takes a look at how FFA programs are teaching students leadership skills and providing them with the knowledge needed to support New York’s agriculture industry. In recent years, I’ve been proud to fight for funding to support FFA programs—including \$100,000 in increased funding this year—as well as for support for my Young Farmers NY program, which is helping to give those new to agriculture the tools they need to be successful.

***Monitoring a Pest:*** Throughout history, farmers have faced countless challenges that threaten their crops. Among the most devastating are the wide variety of insects that wreak havoc on farming operations. This piece looks at steps that are being taken to combat the Western Bean Cutworm, which is a pest that threatens corn and dry bean crops.

***A Spotlight on the Splendor of Rural NYS:*** New York is rich in history—and its only that way because every corner of the Empire State holds connections to people, places and happenings that have shaped who we are today. In the summer 2016 edition of *Rural Futures*, I share some of the most historically significant places in the region I represent—including

Boldt Castle in Jefferson County, Pickens Hall in St. Lawrence County, Fort Ontario in Oswego County, and others—that today, are available for you to visit, enjoy and of course, learn from

***The Joy of Angling:*** Want to get hooked on a new hobby? Learn more about New York's Free Fishing Days, which give people the opportunity to fish in the State without a license.

***Beyond Books:*** At the Canton Free Library, patrons can check out more than books—they have the opportunity to borrow a wide range of tools. This article highlights how the library is giving community members access to nearly 100 tools—everything from pruning shears to baking supplies.

Looking to learn more about news affecting our rural communities? The [summer edition of Rural Futures is available here](#), or you can have a copy mailed to you by calling [\(315\) 782-3418](#).